

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 are pending herein. By this supplemental Amendment, claims 1 and 4 are amended and claims 9-15 are added.

No new matter is added by this supplemental Amendment. Support for the language added to claims 1 and 4, as well as new claims 9-15 are found in the original specification, claims and figures. In particular, support for the language added to claim 1 may be found at, for example, Figures 1 and 2. Support for the language added to claim 4 is found in original claim 1. Support for new claims 9-15 is found in original claims 2-8, respectively.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies shown to Applicants' representative by Examiner Hammond in the November 4, 2004 personal interview. Applicants' separate record of the substance of the interview is incorporated into the following remarks.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants note with appreciation that claims 4-8 were indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicants herein amend claim 4 to include all of the features of original claim 1. Thus, as acknowledged by the Patent Office, claim 4, and the claims dependent therefrom, are in condition for allowance.

II. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,576,838 (hereinafter "Matsumura") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,154,647 (hereinafter "Ishitani"). Claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over these same references and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,734,124 (hereinafter "Yasukuni"). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

The Office Action asserts that Matsumura discloses a supporting plate 261 housed between the cover 221 and cover 211. However, as clearly shown in Figs. 6-8 of Matsumura,

the supporting plate 261 (as alleged by the Patent Office) is located below the cover 211 only, and not between the cover 221 and the cover 211.

During the November 4 interview, the Examiner stated that the entire fuse unit 252 could be interpreted to be the supporting plate and as such, Matsumura still discloses a supporting plate between upper and lower cases.

Applicants respectfully disagree. However, to even more clearly highlight the distinguishing features of claim 1 over Matsumura, Applicants herein amend claim 1 to further recite that the upper case and the lower case mate with each other to together form a chamber in which the supporting plate is disposed so as to enclose the supporting plate within the chamber. This combination of features is not taught or suggested by Matsumura and/or the other cited references of record.

Further, Ishitani fails to remedy the deficiencies of Matsumura as discussed above. That is, neither Matsumura nor Ishitani, alone or in combination, teach or suggest a fuse containing box for directly connecting to and mounting on a battery, wherein the fuse containing box comprises an upper case and a lower case, each made of a polypropylene-based resin, and a supporting plate housed between the upper and lower case and made of a heat-resistant nylon-based resin, wherein the upper and lower cases mate with each other to together form a chamber in which the supporting plate is disposed and enclosed, as recited in claim 1.

Further, Matsumura cannot be modified to result in the claim 1 structure without destroying the structure of Matsumura. More specifically, Matsumura discloses that the supporting plate 261 (i.e., resin body 261 or fuse unit 252) is partitioned into dividing portions 263 and 264. Dividing portion 263 is fastened and connected to the battery terminal 271 in a horizontal direction. Dividing portion 264 is fastened and connected to the battery terminal 271 in a vertical direction. See col. 11, line 57 to col. 12, line 7 of Matsumura. Thus,

although Figs. 6-8 of Matsumura show a cover above and a cover adjacent to the supporting plate 261, 252, enclosing the supporting plate 261, 252 between the covers would not be possible because the supporting plate 261, 252 is attached directly to the battery.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that Matsumura and Ishitani, whether alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest the features of claim 1, or any of the claims dependent therefrom. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are thus respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-15 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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